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AN
ANALYSIS
OF

The Moral and Religious Sentiments

Contained in the WRITINGS of

S O P H O,

AND

DAVID HUME, Esq.

Addressed to the consideration of the Reverend and
Honourable Members of the General Assembly
of the Church of *Scotland*.

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To the REVEREND and HONOURABLE,
The Members of the ensuing General
Assembly of the Church of *Scotland*.

GENTLEMEN,

AS it is the great design of the Christian religion, to teach men to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world; so it is the business of an established church, to employ that power with which she is invested, in promoting purity of faith, and sanctity of manners. Then, and then only, doth she act with dignity in her respective courts, when these important ends are the great objects of her attention.

FOR these purposes are you chosen by your respective presbyteries to represent them in this national assembly; and for these purposes our Most Gracious Sovereign countenances you with a representation of his Royal person. To you therefore, as the public guardians of religion, her friends are intitled, in confidence, to apply, with respect to whatever concerns her interests.

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WHAT particular business may come before you, I do not know. One thing of very general concern, I am sure, deserves your consideration; and that is, the public attack which in this country has of late been made on the great principles and duties of natural and revealed religion, in the works of DAVID HUME, Esq; and in the essays of an author who has been distinguished by the name of SOPHO. It is true, one of these gentlemen has some how got the character of a fine writer, and subtle disputant; and the latter, it is said, holds a place of great importance in this country, and even bears an office in your church. But as I am well assured, that neither the art of the one, nor the power of the other, will avail to overthrow those principles they so boldly attack; so I am persuaded, that by neither will ye be diverted from doing your duty: and your duty unquestionably it is, to give warning of the poison contained in these volumes, and to testify to the whole Christian world your abhorrence of such principles.

PART of these writings have indeed been abroad for some years; and it may be asked, Why take notice of them now, when former assemblies did nothing in that matter? The answer is plain: Both these gentlemen have within these few months past renewed the attack; the one in his history of Britain, and the other in an essay published amongst the observations

observations of the physical and literary society in Edinburgh: which plainly shews, that on their part it is a subsisting controversy; and ought therefore at last to awake the attention of all the friends of religion; and, in particular, make the clergy exert themselves with a becoming resolution, steadiness, and spirit.

It is not my design, in this paper, to enter into the confutation of these opinions. This has been done already with great success, by the smart and sensible author of the *Estimate of the profit and loss of religion*, and in the modest and elegant *Delineation of morality*. Two other authors have distinguished themselves against particular parts of the scheme, viz. the Reverend Mr Adams, a clergyman of the church of England, in his answer to the *Essay on miracles*; and Dr John Stewart, in his very masterly reply to the *Essay on motion*.

To these authors I refer all that desire with candour to enter into the controversy. For my part, I think that the dangerous nature of these opinions is so apparent, that to them may be applied what Mr Hume says of miracles, when wrought in support of a new system of religion, "That the very positions
"are such as ought to be sufficient with all
"men of sense, not only to make them be
"rejected, but rejected without further examination."

My design therefore only is, to analyse the works of these celebrated authors, giving their own expressions under the different heads to which they seem to belong. This method, I imagine, will not only give the clearest view of the sentiments of these gentlemen, but is such as they themselves must allow to be the most fair and candid; because, if in stating the proposition I should happen to mistake their meaning, their own words subjoined must immediately do them justice.

As to my fidelity in the quotations, I need say nothing further, than that I always mention the page, and quote from the following editions.

Essays and treatises on several subjects, by David Hume, Esq; 4 vols. London 1753.

Essays on the principles of morality and natural religion; Edinburgh 1751.

Essays and observations, physical and literary, read before a society in Edinburgh, and published by them; Edinburgh 1754.

The history of Great Britain, vol. 1. by David Hume, Esq; Edinburgh 1754.

I begin with the writings of SOPHO, whose opinions I shall sum up in the following propositions.

P R O P.

P R O P. I.

THere is no necessary relation betwixt cause and effect.

Essays on the princ. of moral. and nat. relig.
p. 274. “ When a new thing or quality is
 “ produced, when in general any change is
 “ brought about, it is extremely doubtful,
 “ whether, by any process of reasoning, we
 “ can conclude it to be an effect, so as neces-
 “ sarily to require a cause of its existence.”

Ditto, p. 274. “ Men of the greatest genius
 “ have been unsuccessful in attempting to
 “ prove, that every thing which begins to
 “ exist, must have a cause of its existence.”

Ditto, p. 275. “ In short, there does not
 “ appear to me any contradiction in the pro-
 “ position, That a thing may begin to exist
 “ without a cause; and therefore I dare not
 “ declare the fact to be impossible.”

Ditto, p. 296. “ It may be in our power
 “ to conceive, but it is not in our power to
 “ believe, that a fine piece of painting, a
 “ well-wrote poem, or a beautiful piece of
 “ architecture, can ever be the effect of
 “ chance, or of blind fatality. The supposition
 “ indeed, so far as we can discover, does not
 “ involve any inconsistency in the nature of
 “ things. It may be possible, for any reason
 “ we

“ we have to the contrary, that a blind and
 “ undesigning cause may be productive of ex-
 “ cellent effects.”

P R O P. II.

Matter is possessed of a power of self-
 motion.

Essay on motion, p. 7. “ Matter, so far as
 “ we can discover, is certainly not endued
 “ with thought, or voluntary motion; and yet
 “ that it is endued with a power of motion in
 “ certain circumstances, appears to me an ex-
 “ treme clear point.”

Ditto, p. 9. “ In many circumstances mat-
 “ ter begins motion, and acts often with great
 “ violence.”

Ditto, p. 12. “ The distinction betwixt ma-
 “ terial and immaterial, not being founded on
 “ the nature of the things which are so distin-
 “ guished, but on the limited nature of our ex-
 “ ternal senses, has not the least tendency to ex-
 “ plain the nature or properties of immaterial
 “ substances, further than barely, that these
 “ properties are of such a kind, as not to be the
 “ objects of any external sense. From these
 “ premisses, the following reasoning will,
 “ it is hoped, be found entirely conclusive.
 “ Size, figure, motion, weight, &c. are qua-
 “ lities of matter which are perceived by our
 “ external

“ external senses : but there is none so foolish
 “ to maintain, that matter can have no qua-
 “ lities but what are objects of an external sense.
 “ It would be the same as to deny the exist-
 “ ence of immaterial substances, because these
 “ do not exhibit themselves to our senses.
 “ Power is a property or quality, of which
 “ none of our external senses afford us the per-
 “ ception ; and therefore our want of percep-
 “ tion of power does not more conclude a ne-
 “ gation of power to matter, than to spirit.—
 “ Experience is our only guide.—We see a
 “ stone fall without any external impulse.
 “ From that effect we have a just foundation
 “ to conclude, that the stone has a power of
 “ moving itself. And if we have not a just
 “ foundation to make this conclusion, we have
 “ not a just foundation to make this other con-
 “ clusion, That a man has a power of self-
 “ motion when we see him walking. And,
 “ after all, it must appear extremely whimsi-
 “ cal to deny to matter a power of motion,
 “ merely because matter discovers itself to our
 “ external senses in part ; when, at the same
 “ time, we are so ready to attribute powers of
 “ every sort to immaterial substances, which
 “ cannot be reached by our external senses,
 “ either in whole or in part.”

Ditto, p. 16. “ And therefore, upon the
 “ whole, as we have no foundation, either in
 “ reason or experience, to deny activity to mat-
 “ ter, I conclude, that the doctrine of the
 “ absolute

“ absolute inertness of matter, is not only re-
 “ pugnant to truth, but tends, in an indirect
 “ manner, to arraign the Deity of want of
 “ power, or of wisdom, or of both.”

Query 1. As a given body is more attracted to a large quantity of matter than a less, if this power be in the matter itself, must it not have a faculty of determining itself according to its position with regard to other bodies?

Query 2. But is it not by the very same kind of argument, *viz.* That a man has a power of determining himself, that we can only prove him endued with reason?

Query 3. Does not therefore a power of beginning motion, seem necessarily to infer a power of thinking?—And is not attributing such a power to matter, the very foundation of Atheism?

P R O P. III.

Nothing appears from reason that can induce us to think that the world is not eternal.

Essays on morality, &c. p. 317. “ Admitting
 “ that something has existed from all eternity,
 “ I find no *data* to determine *a priori*, whe-
 “ ther this world has existed of itself from all
 “ eternity,

“eternity, in a constant succession of causes
 “and effects; or whether it be an effect
 “produced by an almighty power.”

Ditto, p. 318. “It is indeed hard to con-
 “ceive a world eternal and self-existent, where
 “all things are carried on by blind fate, with-
 “out design or intelligence; and yet I can
 “find no demonstration to the contrary. If
 “we can form any obscure notion of one in-
 “telligent being existing from all eternity, it
 “appears not more difficult to form a notion
 “of a succession of beings with or without
 “intelligence, or a notion of a perpetual suc-
 “cession of causes and effects.”

Ditto, p. 319. “It is indeed less difficult to
 “conceive one eternal unchangeable being
 “who made the world, than to conceive a
 “blind chain of causes and effects. At least,
 “we are disposed to the former, as being more
 “agreeable to the imagination. But as we
 “cannot find any inconsistency in the latter
 “supposition, we cannot justly say that it is
 “demonstrably false.”

Ditto, p. 157. “What is a cause with re-
 “spect to its proper effect, is considered as an
 “effect with respect to some prior cause, and
 “so backward without end.”

P R O P. IV.

The powers of reason can give us no satisfying evidence of the being of a God.

Essays on morality, &c. p. 317. "If any one
"being can begin to exist without a cause,
"every being may. Upon which supposition
"we can never hope for a demonstration that
"any one being must be eternal."

Ditto, p. 332. "To society we owe all the
"blessings of life, and particularly the know-
"ledge of the Deity."

Ditto, p. 242. "Our senses, external and
"internal, are the true sources from whence
"the knowledge of the Deity is derived to us."

Query. If there is nothing in the argument
a priori, and nothing in the argument *a poste-*
riori, can the being of God be at all proven?

P R O P. V.

The perfections of God are either such
as we cannot prove, or cannot com-
prehend.

Essays on morality, &c. p. 350. "The attri-
"bute

"bute of unity is what of all we can have the
 "least certainty about by the light of nature,
 "It is not inconsistent, that there should
 "be two or more beings of the very highest
 "order, whose essence and actions are so re-
 "gulated by the nature of the beings them-
 "selves, as to be altogether concordant and
 "harmonious. In truth, the nature of the Di-
 "vine Being is so far out of our reach, that
 "we must be absolutely at a loss to apply to
 "it unity or multiplicity. This property ap-
 "plies to numbers, and to individual things;
 "but we know not that it will apply to the
 "Deity."

Ditto, p. 352. "These two attributes,
 "power and intelligence, I join together, be-
 "cause the same reflection will apply to both.
 "The wisdom and power which must neces-
 "sarily be supposed in the creation and go-
 "vernment of this world, are so far beyond
 "the reach of our comprehension, that they
 "may justly be styled infinite. We can a-
 "scribe no bounds to either; and we have no
 "other notion of infinite, but that to which
 "we can ascribe no bounds."

This author, having observed that David
 Hume, Esq; had said, That we could attri-
 bute no more to the cause than we saw to be
 in the effect, thinks proper to improve upon
 this assertion; and says,

Ditto, p. 356. "Nay, this same philoso-
 B 2 "pher

“pher might have gone a great way further,
 “by observing, when any thing comes into
 “existence, that, by no process of reasoning,
 “can we so much as infer any cause of its ex-
 “istence.—Reason will not help me out in
 “attributing to the Deity even that precise de-
 “gree of power, intelligence, and benevo-
 “lence, which appears in his workmanship.
 “I find no inconsistency in supposing, that a
 “blind and undesigning cause may be produc-
 “tive of excellent effects. It will, I presume,
 “be difficult to produce a demonstration to the
 “contrary.”

P R O P. VI.

It is whimsical and absurd to pretend,
 that the material world is subject to
 the providence of God.

Essay on motion, p. 10. Having affirmed,
 that matter has a power of self-motion, he
 adds, “But it is maintained by the bulk of
 “our philosophers, that matter is altogether
 “incapable of active powers; that activity is
 “confined to immaterial substances; and that
 “inertness is implied in the very conception of
 “matter. This moves them to ascribe to some
 “invisible agency all that activity which we dis-
 “cover in matter. In every one of the above
 “instances, matter, they say, does not act, but
 “is

“ is acted upon by the Deity, who interposes
 “ by general laws to preserve the uniformity of
 “ nature. Thus, when a stone falls, it is not
 “ the stone which acts, but the Deity. It is
 “ the continual action of the Deity which keeps
 “ the planets in elliptical orbits; and when a
 “ plague infests the world, it is the Deity who
 “ spreads the infection, and directs inert mat-
 “ ter to ravage and destroy.—With regard
 “ to this whimsical doctrine, which declares
 “ war against our senses, it may be observed,
 “ that natural philosophy is not much affected
 “ by it, of whatever errors it may be produc-
 “ tive in the more abstract sciences.”

Query 1. As this philosopher in many places
 tells us, that theology is one of the abstracted
 sciences, may it not be asked, What harm it
 can do, either in that or in morals, to affirm,
 That it is by the providence of God that the
 motion of the heavenly bodies are directed, and
 plagues made to infest the world?

Query 2. Is not this doctrine of a particular
 providence governing the material world, the
 constant doctrine of scripture, which instances
 in these very particulars which he has repre-
 sented as whimsical and absurd?

P R O P.

P R O P. VII.

Every class of beings is perfect.

Essays on morality, &c. p. 39. “The common nature of every class of beings is felt by us as perfect.”

N. B. We shall just now see the perfection ascribed by this author to his own species.

P R O P. VIII.

Man is a mere machine, under an irresistible necessity in all his actions.

Essays on morality, p. 163. “In the material world there is nothing that can be called contingent.

“In the moral world this does not appear so clearly. Man is the actor here. He is endued with will, and he acts from choice. He has a power of beginning motion.—He has appetites and passions, which prompt him to their respective gratifications. But he is under no necessity of blindly submitting to their impulse. For reason has a power of restraint; it suggests motives from the cool views of good and evil; he deliberates upon these; in consequence of his deliberation
“he

“ he chuses : and here, if any where, lies our
 “ liberty.”

Ditto, p. 164. “ Let us examine to what
 “ this liberty amounts. If motives have any
 “ influence, as they are allowed, they may
 “ be so combined as to leave little freedom to
 “ the mind, or rather none at all. Nay, in
 “ some instances, natural and moral necessity
 “ may so far coincide, as scarcely to be distin-
 “ guished.”

Ditto, p. 168. “ In short, if motives are
 “ not under our power or direction, which
 “ is confessedly the fact, we can at bottom
 “ have no liberty. We are so constituted, that
 “ we cannot exert a single action, but with
 “ some view, aim, or purpose. At the same
 “ time, when two opposite motives present
 “ themselves, we have not the power of an
 “ arbitrary choice. We are directed by a
 “ necessary determination of our nature, to
 “ prefer the strongest motive.”

Ditto, p. 170. “ The laws of mind, and
 “ the laws of matter, are in this respect per-
 “ fectly similar ; though in making the com-
 “ parison we are apt to deceive ourselves.”

Ditto, p. 183. “ The doctrine of universal
 “ necessity being thus laid open, and proved
 “ to be the true system of the universe.”

Ditto, p. 187. “ Let us be honest then.
 “ Let

“ Let us fairly own, that the truth of things is
“ on the side of necessity.”

From which it follows, that man imagines
himself free, yet is under the bands of necessity.

P R O P. IX.

Though man be thus necessarily de-
termined in all his actions, yet does
he believe himself free, God having
implanted into his nature this de-
ceitful feeling of liberty.

Essays on morality, &c. p. 157. “ Events
“ viewed in a train of causes and effects,
“ should naturally be considered, one would
“ think, as necessary and fixed.—That we
“ have such a feeling, is not to be controvert-
“ ed: and yet when we search further into
“ human nature, a feeling of an opposite kind
“ is discovered, a feeling of chance or contin-
“ gency in events; which is not less deeply
“ rooted in our nature than the former.”

Ditto, p. 159. “ When we consider in
“ what view our own actions are perceived by
“ the mind, there is something which is e-
“ qually strange and surprising. It is admitted
“ by all men, that we act from motives.—It
“ being then a natural feeling, that actions are
“ so connected with their proper motives, as
“ necessarily

“ necessarily to arise from the temper, cha-
 “ racter, and other circumstances of the agent,
 “ it should seem, that all the train of human
 “ actions would occur to our minds as neces-
 “ sary and fixed. Yet human actions do not
 “ always appear to us in this light. It is a
 “ matter of fact, that the feeling varies ac-
 “ cording to the different position of the ob-
 “ ject. Previous to any particular action, we
 “ indeed always judge, that the action will be
 “ the necessary result of some motive. But
 “ has a man done what is wrong and shame-
 “ ful? instantly the feeling varies. We ac-
 “ cuse, and we condemn him, for acting the
 “ wrong and shameful part. We conceive
 “ that he had a power of acting otherwise,
 “ and ought to have acted otherwise. The
 “ whole train of our feelings in a moment ac-
 “ commodate themselves to the supposition of
 “ his being entirely a free agent.”

Ditto, p. 161. “ These are phenomena in
 “ human nature, of a very singular kind :
 “ feelings which on both sides are natural,
 “ and yet clash with each other : every event
 “ admitted to have a necessary cause, and yet
 “ many events supposed contingent : every
 “ action admitted necessarily to flow from a
 “ determining motive; and yet the same action,
 “ in an after view, considered and judged of
 “ as free. Our feelings are, no doubt, the test
 “ of truth.—But these feelings can be no test
 “ of truth ; because, in contradictory proposi-
 “ tions, truth cannot lie on both sides. There

“ is no other way to get out of this labyrinth,
 “ than to enter on a strict survey of the na-
 “ tural and moral world.”

Ditto, p. 152. “ Several instances there are
 “ of perceptions, which, for want of a more
 “ proper term, may be called deceitful; be-
 “ cause they differ from the real truth.”

Ditto, p. 153. “ This is quite similar to
 “ what we observe in the natural world, where
 “ external objects and their qualities, as con-
 “ veyed by the senses, differ widely from
 “ what true philosophy teaches them to be.
 “ And secondary qualities, such as colours,
 “ have no real foundation in the object, but
 “ are only attributed to it.”

Ditto, p. 155. “ Let us carry on this spe-
 “ culation from the natural to the moral world,
 “ and examine whether there are not here
 “ also analogous instances of deceitful im-
 “ pressions. This will lead us into an unbeat-
 “ en track. We are to open a scene entirely
 “ new; which, like most other things that
 “ are new, may perhaps surprise the reader.”

Ditto, p. 183. “ The doctrine of universal
 “ necessity being thus laid fairly open, and
 “ proved to be the true system of the universe;
 “ let us take a more deliberate view of the
 “ feelings of contingency and liberty. And
 “ as we must now admit, perhaps reluctant-
 “ ly, that these feelings are in reality of the
 “ delusive kind; our next and only remaining
 “ theme

“ theme will be, to unravel, if possible, this
 “ curious mystery, by trying to reach the
 “ purpose of enduing man with feelings, so
 “ contradictory to the truth of things.”

Ditto, p. 187. “ Let us be honest then.
 “ Let us fairly own, that the truth of things
 “ is on the side of necessity; but that it was
 “ necessary for man to be formed, with such
 “ feelings and notions of contingency, as
 “ would fit him for the part he has to act.”

Ditto, p. 210. “ The above-described ar-
 “ tificial sense of liberty, is wholly contrived
 “ to support virtue, and to give its dictates the
 “ force of a law. Hereby it is discovered to
 “ be in a singular manner the care of the
 “ Deity; and a peculiar sort of glory is thrown
 “ around it. The author of nature has not
 “ rested it upon the ordinary feelings and prin-
 “ ciples of human nature, as he has rested our
 “ other affections and appetites, even those
 “ which are most necessary to our existence.
 “ But a sort of extraordinary machinery is in-
 “ troduced for its sake. Human nature is
 “ forced, as it were, out of its course, and
 “ made to receive a nice and artificial set of
 “ feelings; merely that conscience may have
 “ a commanding power, and virtue be
 “ set as on a throne. This could not o-
 “ therwise be brought about, but by means
 “ of the deceitful feeling of liberty; which
 “ therefore is a greater honour to virtue, a
 “ higher recommendation of it, than if our
 “ conceptions

"conceptions were in every particular correspondent to the truth of things."

P R O P. X.

This deceitful feeling is the only foundation of virtue.

Essays on moral. p. 49. "Human actions are distinguished in our feeling, as fit, right, and meet to be done; or as unfit, unmeet, and wrong to be done. These are simple feelings, capable of no definition; and which cannot otherwise be explained, than by making use of the words that are appropriated to them.—In this consists the morality or immorality of human actions."

Ditto, p. 63. "The authority lies in this circumstance, that we feel and perceive the action to be our duty, and what we are indispensably bound to perform."

Ditto, p. 94. "It can never be said, in any proper sense, that our only obligation to virtue is the will of God; seeing it is true, that, abstracting altogether from his will, there is an obligation to virtue founded in the very frame of our nature."

Ditto, p. 95. "Morality no more depends upon the will of God, than upon our own will."

Ditto, p. 98. "Suppose that man by nature
"ture

"ture had no approbatory or disapprobatory
 "feeling of actions; it could never be e-
 "vinced, by any abstract argument what-
 "ever, that the worship of the Deity is his
 "duty; or that it is more fit for him to be
 "honest, than to be dishonest."

Ditto, p. 99. "We are compelled by
 "strong and evident feelings, to perform all
 "the different duties of life."

Ditto, p. 209. "Ideas of moral obligation,
 "of remorse, of merit, and all that is con-
 "nected with this way of thinking, arise
 "from what may be called a wise delusion in
 "our nature concerning liberty."

Ditto, p. 210. "The above-described arti-
 "ficial sense of liberty is wholly contrived to
 "support virtue, and to give its dictates the
 "force of a law."

P R O P. XI.

That since man is thus necessarily de-
 termined in all his actions, and can
 have nothing more than a deceitful
 feeling of liberty, it follows as a
 necessary consequence, that there
 can be no sin or moral evil in the
 world.

Essays on morality, &c. p. 307. "In this
 "grand

“ grand apparatus of instinctive faculties, by
 “ which the secrets of nature are disclosed to
 “ us, one faculty seems to be with-held,
 “ though in appearance the most useful of all;
 “ and that is, a faculty to discern, what things
 “ are noxious, and what are friendly.”

Ditto, p. 308. “ Man has no original feel-
 “ ing of what is salutary to him, and what
 “ is hurtful.”

Ditto, p. 37. “ Any action conformable
 “ to the common nature of the species, is
 “ considered by us as regular and good.”

Ditto, p. 38. “ The laws of nature are de-
 “ rived from the common nature of man, of
 “ which every person partakes who is not a
 “ monster.”

Ditto, p. 39. “ The laws which govern
 “ sociable creatures, differ widely from those
 “ which govern the savage and solitary. No-
 “ thing more natural nor more orderly among
 “ solitary creatures, than to make food one of
 “ another.”

Ditto, p. 40. “ The laws which ought to
 “ govern every animal, are to be derived from
 “ no other source than the common nature of
 “ the species.”

Ditto, p. 123. “ Self-preservation being the
 “ leading principle, it is hard to say that any
 “ means, strictly speaking, are unlawful to at-
 “ tain that end.”

Ditto,

Ditto, p. 136. "If we can trust history,
"the original inhabitants of this earth were a
"brutish and savage race."

Ditto, p. 122. "The laws of nature may be
"defined to be, rules of our conduct and beha-
"viour, founded on natural principles, appro-
"ved of by the moral sense, and enforced by
"natural rewards and punishments."

Ditto, p. 123. "Hence it is obvious, that we
"may safely indulge every principle of action,
"where the action is not disapproved of by
"the moral sense; and that we ought to per-
"form every action which the moral sense in-
"forms us to be our duty."

Ditto, p. 138. "There are peculiar circum-
"stances, that are sufficient to overbalance the
"most vigorous operations of the moral sense,
"and to produce in a good measure the same
"effects which would result from a total ab-
"sence of that sense."

Ditto, p. 140. "The moral sense is not
"sufficient to influence the vulgar and illite-
"rate."

Ditto, p. 147. "The law of nature, which
"is the law of our nature, cannot be stationa-
"ry. It must vary with the nature of man,
"and consequently refine gradually as human
"nature refines. Putting an enemy to death
"in cold blood, is now looked upon with dis-
"taste and horror, and therefore is immoral,
"though

“ though it was not always so in the same degree.”

Ditto, p. 376. “ Our peculiar manner of
 “ conceiving human actions, as right or wrong,
 “ and as praise or blame worthy, is wholly
 “ founded on a deceitful feeling of liberty,—
 “ Which discovery affords a solid answer to the
 “ objection arising from moral evil, which,
 “ so far as I know, has not hitherto received
 “ any good answer. And it is, That the ob-
 “ jection rests entirely upon a false supposition,
 “ as if human actions were seen in the same
 “ light by the Deity in which they are seen by
 “ men. A feeling which is not agreeable to
 “ the truth of things, though wisely ordered
 “ to correct an imperfect constitution in man,
 “ cannot be ascribed to a perfect being. The
 “ Deity perceiving all things as they are, with-
 “ out disguise, knows, that what is termed
 “ moral evil in the language of man, is, as
 “ well as moral good, the result of general
 “ laws, and of a necessary connection betwixt
 “ causes and their effects. Every thing pos-
 “ sesses its proper place in his plan. All our
 “ actions contribute equally to carry on the
 “ great and good designs of Providence; and
 “ therefore there is nothing which in his sight
 “ is evil, at least nothing which is evil upon
 “ the whole.”

Ditto, p. 394. And then, in that famous
 prayer which concludes his work, he adds,
 “ Thou appointest as salutary what we lament
 “ as

“ as painful. What mortals term fin, thou
 “ pronouncest only to be error. For moral
 “ evil vanishes, in some measure, from before
 “ thy more perfect sight. And as at the be-
 “ ginning of days thou sawest, so thou seest
 “ and pronouncest still, That every thing thou
 “ hast made is good.”

Thus I have laid before you some remarkable passages from this great philosopher, full of irreligion, and full of inconsistency. As it is not my design to excuse the former, so it is none of my business to attempt to remove the latter. Nor do I indeed see that it can easily be done on any supposition but one.

It seems to have been the very ground-work of Atheism in all ages, *That universal nature was God.* A man who holds this opinion may, in consistency with himself, affirm, that motion is essential to matter; that all is determined by an irresistible fate; that yet man may have a feeling of liberty; that as from consciousness he had the proof of his own existence, so that such consciousness was the only argument by which he could believe a God, as being himself a part of this great whole; and that, properly speaking, there can be neither virtue nor vice, fin nor holiness, in the world.

Quæritur, Can this be the sentiments of our author?

D

H A V I N G

HAVING laid before you these extracts from the writings of this anonymous, though well-known author, I shall subjoin some passages no less remarkable from the works of his brother philosopher and friend; who has at least been more honest in this respect, that, without disguise, he has pled the cause of vice and infidelity.—I shall adduce none of my quotations from the *Treatise on human nature*, though this be the compleat system, since he has not thought fit to own it; but content myself with what I find in his *Essays and History*, to which he has prefixed his name, and which he seems to prophesy will be had in veneration by distant ages, to whom the very name of religion shall be unknown.

According, then, to this celebrated moralist,

P R O P. I.

ALL distinction betwixt virtue and vice is merely imaginary.

Essays, vol. 1. p. 239. “Good and ill, both
“natural and moral, are entirely relative to
“human sentiment and affection.”

Ditto, p. 235. “Were I not afraid of appearing too philosophical, I would remind
“my reader of that famous doctrine, supposed
“to be fully proved in modern times, That
“tastes

“ tastes and colours, and all other sensible qualities, lie not in the bodies, but merely in the senses. The case is the same with beauty and deformity, virtue and vice.”

Vol. 2. p. 99. “ The isosceles and scalenum are distinguished by boundaries more exact than vice and virtue, right and wrong.”

Vol. 4. p. 29. “ No gratification, however sensual, can of itself be esteemed vicious, A gratification is only vicious, when it ingrosses all a man’s expence, and leaves no ability for such acts of duty and generosity as are required by his situation and fortune.”

P R O P. II.

Justice has no foundation further than it contributes to public advantage.

Essays, vol. 1. p. 327. “ Obligation to justice is founded entirely on the interests of society, which require mutual abstinence from property, in order to preserve peace amongst mankind.”

Vol. 3. p. 33. “ Public utility is the sole origin of justice; and reflections on the beneficial consequences of this virtue, are the sole foundation of its merit.”

Ditto, p. 34. “ If every external requisite

“ for satisfaction was liberally provided with-
 “ out any care of man, there could be no place
 “ for the cautious, jealous virtue of justice.—
 “ It would be an idle ceremonial.”

Ditto, p. 41. “ Reverse, in any consider-
 “ able circumstance, the condition of men;
 “ produce extreme abundance or extreme ne-
 “ cessity; implant in the human breast perfect
 “ moderation and humanity, or perfect rapa-
 “ ciousness and malice: by rendering justice
 “ totally useless, you thereby totally destroy its
 “ essence, and suspend its obligation upon man-
 “ kind.”

Ditto, p. 45. “ Creatures who have no
 “ power to resist or injure us, have no claim
 “ to justice.”

P R O P. III.

Adultery is very lawful, but some-
 times not expedient.

Essays, vol. 1. p. 256. “ A man, in conjoin-
 “ ing himself to a woman, is bound to her
 “ according to the terms of his engagement.
 “ In begetting children, he is bound, by all
 “ the laws of nature and humanity, to provide
 “ for their subsistence and education. When
 “ he has performed these two parts of duty,
 “ no being can reproach him with injustice or
 “ injury. And as the terms of his engage-
 “ ment,

ment, as well as the methods of subsisting his
 offspring, may be very various, it is mere super-
 stition to imagine, that marriage can be
 entirely uniform, and will admit only of one
 mode or form. Did not human laws re-
 strain the natural liberty of men, every parti-
 cular marriage would be as different as con-
 tracts or bargains of any other kind or species."

He then gives instances of different modes of marriage, some for a longer, some for a shorter time; some with one wife, some with more; nay stoops so low, as to remark what passes in the brute creation; where, in some cases, one act completes the marriage, in others it subsists for the season; and then he adds,

Ditto, p. 258. "But nature having endued man with reason, has not so exactly regulated every article of his marriage-contract, but has left him to adjust them by his own prudence, according to his particular circumstances and situation. Municipal laws are a supply to the wisdom of each individual; and, at the same time, by restraining the natural liberty of men, make the private interest submit to the interest of the public. All regulations, therefore, on this head are equally lawful, and equally conformable to the principles of nature; though they are not all equally convenient, or equally useful to society. The laws may allow of polygamy, as among the eastern nations; or
 " of

“ of voluntary divorces, as among the Greeks
 “ and Romans ; or they may confine one man
 “ to one woman during the whole course of
 “ their lives, as among the modern Euro-
 “ peans.”

Vol. 3. p. 70. “ The long and helpless in-
 “ fancy of man requires the combination of
 “ parents for the subsistence of their young ;
 “ and that combination requires the virtue of
 “ chastity, or fidelity to the marriage-bed.
 “ Without such an utility it will readily be
 “ owned, that such a virtue would never have
 “ been thought of.”

Having in an elaborate dialogue endeavour-
 ed to shew, that there was no fixed standard
 of virtue ; but that what was vicious in one
 country, was virtuous in another ; he instances
 in the case of adultery.

Ditto, p. 237. “ Adultery was reckoned a
 “ vice among the Athenians ; but in France it
 “ is in the highest vogue and esteem, and
 “ practised by every man of education, and
 “ tamely allowed by every man else.”

Ditto, p. 70. “ An infidelity of this nature
 “ is much more pernicious in women than in
 “ men. Hence the laws of chastity are much
 “ stricter over the one sex than over the other.”

And in a note at the foot of the page, he
 intimates, that was it not for the bad exam-
 ple

ple to young women, those who are past child-bearing need lay themselves under no restraints of this kind.

P R O P. IV.

Religion and its ministers are prejudicial to mankind, and will always be found either to run into the heights of superstition or enthusiasm.

Essays, vol. 1. p. 163. "Chance, therefore, or secret unknown causes, must have a great influence on the rise and progress of all the refined arts."

Ditto, p. 237. "Some passions or inclinations, in the enjoyment of their object, are not so steady or constant as others, nor convey such durable pleasure and satisfaction. Philosophical devotion, for instance, like the enthusiasm of a poet, is the transitory effect of high spirits, great leisure, a fine genius, and a habit of study and contemplation. But, notwithstanding all these circumstances, an abstracted, invisible object, like that which natural religion alone presents to us, cannot long actuate the mind, or be of any moment in life. To render the passion of continuance, we must find some method of affecting the senses and imagination, and must embrace some historical,

“ rical, as well as philosophical accounts of
 “ the Divinity. Popular superstitions and ob-
 “ servances are even found to be of use in this
 “ particular.”

Having put into the mouth of a supposed friend an elaborate defence of the Epicurean opinions against providence, and a future state, from *p.* 213. to 225. of *vol.* 2. he then adds,

“ You, my friend, have embraced the prin-
 “ ciples to which you know I have always ex-
 “ pressed a particular attachment.”

Vol. 1. *p.* 279. “ It is a trite, but not alto-
 “ gether a false maxim, That priests of all re-
 “ ligions are the same.—They support the
 “ veneration paid them, by a continued gri-
 “ mace and hypocrisy.”

Ditto, *p.* 280. “ Those of them that are
 “ possessed of a temper more susceptible of de-
 “ votion, make a zeal for religious observances
 “ compensate for many vices and enormities.
 “ The ambition of the clergy can only be sa-
 “ tisfied, by promoting ignorance, and super-
 “ stition, and implicit faith, and pious frauds.
 “ And having got what Archimedes only want-
 “ ed, *viz.* another world on which he could
 “ fix his engines, no wonder they move this
 “ world at their pleasure.”

History, *p.* 27. Speaking of the church of Rome, he says, “ Like all other species of
 “ superstition,” (*N.B.* Superstition and reli-
 gion

gion are used as synonymous terms by this author), "it rouses the vain fears of unhappy mortals; but it knows also the secret of allaying these fears, and by exterior rites, ceremonies, and abasements, though sometimes at the expence of morals, it reconciles the penitent to his offended Deity."

Ditto, p. 67. "King James had observed, in his progress through England, that a Judaical observance of the Sunday was gaining every day ground, and that the people, under pretext of religion, were, contrary to former practice, debarred from such sports and recreations as contributed both to their health and their amusement. Festivals which, in all other nations and ages, are partly dedicated to public worship, partly to mirth and society, were here totally appropriated to the offices of religion, and served to nourish those sullen and gloomy contemplations, to which the people were, of themselves, so unfortunately subject. The King falsely concluded, that it would be easy to infuse chearfulness into this dark spirit of devotion; he issued a proclamation, to allow and encourage, after divine service, all kinds of lawful games and exercises; and by his authority he endeavoured to give sanction to a practice, which his prejudiced subjects regarded as the utmost profaneness and impiety."

Ditto, p. 330. "So congenial to the human
E " man

“ man mind are religious sentiments, that
 “ where the temper is not guarded by a phi-
 “ losophical scepticism, the most cool and de-
 “ termined, it is impossible to counterfeit long
 “ these holy fervours, without feeling some
 “ share of the assumed warmth. And, on
 “ the other hand, so precarious and tempora-
 “ ry is the operation of these supernatural
 “ views, that the religious ecstasies, if con-
 “ stantly employed, must often be counter-
 “ feit, and must ever be warped by those
 “ more familiar motives of interest and am-
 “ bition, which insensibly gain upon the
 “ mind.”

Ditto, p. 390. “ Had Charles been of a
 “ disposition to regard all theological contro-
 “ versy as the mere result of human folly and
 “ depravity, he yet had been obliged, in good
 “ policy, to adhere to Episcopal jurisdiction.
 “ —But Charles had never attained such
 “ enlarged principles.”

Ditto, p. 415. “ Under colour of keeping
 “ the sacraments from profanation, the clergy
 “ of all Christian sects had assumed what they
 “ call the power of the keys, or the right of
 “ fulminating excommunication ; and this pre-
 “ text is so natural, that in most other reli-
 “ gions, particularly that of the Druids, a like
 “ engine of priestly authority has been em-
 “ ployed.”

Essays,

Essays, vol. 1. p. 92. "In all ages of the
" world priests have been enemies to liberty."

Ditto, p. 282. "Revenge is a very natural
" passion to mankind; but seems to reign with
" the greatest force in priests and women."

Ditto, *ibid.* "Many of the vices of hu-
" man nature are, by fixed moral causes, in-
" flamed in that profession."

P R O P. V.

Christianity has no evidence of its be-
ing a divine revelation.

After having said that most other religions
were embraced and protected by the ma-
gistrate, he adds,—*Essays*, vol. 1. p. 87. "But
" the Christian religion arising, while prin-
" ciples directly opposite to it were firmly e-
" stablished in the polite part of the world,
" who despised the nation that first broached
" this novelty; no wonder, that in such cir-
" cumstances it was but little countenanced
" by the civil magistrate, and that the priest-
" hood were allowed to ingross all the authority
" in the new sect. So bad a use did they make
" of this power, even in those early times,
" that the persecutions of Christianity may,
" perhaps, in part be ascribed to the violence
" instilled by them into their followers. And
" the same principles of priestly government
E 2 " continuing

“ continuing after Christianity became the e-
 “ stablished religion, they have ingendered a
 “ spirit of persecution, which has ever since
 “ been the poison of human society, and the
 “ source of the most inveterate factions in e-
 “ very government.”

And in a note at the foot of the page, after having said that the conduct of the Romans towards the Christians was very different from what they had always shown towards those who differed from them in matters of religion, he adds,

“ Hence we may entertain a suspicion, that
 “ these furious persecutions of Christianity
 “ were in some measure owing to the impru-
 “ dent zeal and bigotry of the first propaga-
 “ tors of that sect; and ecclesiastical history
 “ affords us many reasons to confirm this su-
 “ spicion.”

Ditto, p. 240. “ Whoever considers, with-
 “ out prejudice, the course of human actions,
 “ will find, that men are almost entirely
 “ guided by constitution and temper.—If a
 “ man have a lively sense of honour and vir-
 “ tue, with moderate passions, his conduct
 “ will always be conformable to the rules of
 “ morality; or if he depart from them, his
 “ return will be easy and expeditious. But,
 “ on the other hand, where one is born of
 “ so perverse a frame of mind, of so callous
 “ and insensible a disposition, as to have no re-
 “ lish

"lish for virtue and humanity, no sympathy
 "with his fellow-creatures, no desire of e-
 "steem and applause; such a one must be al-
 "lowed entirely incurable: nor is there any
 "remedy in philosophy.—I must repeat it;
 "my philosophy affords no remedy in such a
 "case.—But then I ask, if any other phi-
 "losophy can afford a remedy, or if it be pos-
 "sible, by any system, to render all mankind
 "virtuous, however perverse may be their
 "natural frame of mind? Experience will
 "soon convince us of the contrary."

Vol. 2. p. 182. "It is a general maxim,
 "That no testimony is sufficient to establish
 "a miracle, unless the testimony be of such
 "a kind, that its falsehood would be more
 "miraculous, than the fact which it endea-
 "vours to establish.—But it is easy to shew,
 "that we have been a great deal too liberal
 "in our concessions, and that there never
 "was a miraculous event, in any history, e-
 "stablished on so full an evidence."

Ditto, p. 184. "There are in the human
 "mind the passions of surprise and wonder,
 "which have in them an agreeable emotion:
 "these being raised by miracles, give a sensible
 "tendency towards the belief of those events.
 "——But if the spirit of religion join itself to
 "the love of wonder, there is an end of com-
 "mon sense; and human testimony, in these
 "circumstances, loses all pretensions to autho-
 "rity. A religionist may be an enthusiast, and
 "imagine

“ imagine he sees what has no reality: he
 “ may know his narration to be false, and yet
 “ persevere in it, with the best intentions in
 “ the world, for the sake of promoting so
 “ holy a cause.”

The whole intention of the *Essay on miracles*, is, to prove that miracles in their very nature are incapable of proof. And he very sily dwells on such forgeries, as bear some resemblance to the miracles in the gospel. And with this evident view, he gives a very particular account of the miracles wrought at the tomb of Abbé Paris, as collected together by the author of the *Recueil des miracles de l'Abbé Paris*. But lest the thrust in the dark should not take, he adds,

Vol. 2. p. 196. “ There runs however
 “ through the whole of this author’s perfor-
 “ mance, a ridiculous comparison betwixt
 “ the miracles of our Saviour and those of the
 “ Abbé; wherein it is asserted, that the evi-
 “ dence for the latter is equal to that for the
 “ former: as if the testimony of men could
 “ ever be put in the balance with that of God
 “ himself, who conducted the pen of the in-
 “ spired writers. If these writers indeed were
 “ to be considered merely as human testimo-
 “ ny, the French author is very moderate in
 “ his comparison; since he might, with some
 “ appearance of reason, pretend, that the
 “ Jansenist miracles much surpass the others
 “ in evidence and authority.”

Ditto,

Ditto, p. 200. "What greater temptation
 " than to appear a missionary, a prophet, an
 " ambassador from heaven? Who would not
 " encounter many dangers and difficulties, to
 " attain so sublime a character? Or if, by the
 " help of vanity and a heated imagination, a
 " man has first made a convert of himself, and
 " entered seriously into the delusion; who e-
 " ver scruples to make use of pious frauds, in
 " support of so holy and meritorious a cause?"

Ditto, p. 202. "Upon the whole, then,
 " it appears, that no testimony for any kind
 " of miracle can ever possibly amount to a
 " probability, much less to a proof."

Ditto, p. 203. "We may establish it as a
 " maxim, That no human testimony can have
 " such force as to prove a miracle, and make
 " it a just foundation for any system of reli-
 " gion."

Then he instances in the case of its being
 affirmed that one suppose Queen Elisabeth
 rose from the dead, and says,

"Should all the historians who treat of
 " England agree in affirming this; from the
 " very nature of the thing affirmed, I should
 " not hesitate one moment in referring it ei-
 " ther to the knavery or folly of men.—
 " But should this miracle be ascribed to any
 " new system of religion; men in all ages
 " have been so much imposed on by ridi-
 " culous

“culous stories of that kind, that this very
 “circumstance would be a full proof of a
 “cheat, and sufficient, with all men of sense,
 “not only to make them reject the fact, but
 “even reject it without farther examination.
 “Though the being to whom the miracle is
 “ascribed should be supposed in this case al-
 “mighty, it does not on that account become
 “a whit more probable.”

Ditto, p. 204. “I am the better pleased
 “with this method of reasoning, as I think it
 “may serve to confound those dangerous
 “friends or disguised enemies to the Christian
 “religion, who have undertaken to defend it
 “by the principles of human reason. Our
 “most holy religion is founded on faith, not on
 “reason; and it is a sure method of exposing
 “it, to put it to such a trial as it is by no
 “means fitted to endure. To make this more
 “evident, let us examine those miracles re-
 “lated in scripture; and not to lose ourselves
 “in too wide a field, let us confine ourselves
 “to such as we find in the Pentateuch, which
 “we shall examine, as these pretended Chri-
 “stians would have us, not as the word and
 “testimony of God himself, but as the pro-
 “duction of a mere human writer and histo-
 “rian. Here then we are first to consider
 “a book, presented to us by a barbarous and
 “ignorant people, wrote in an age when they
 “were still more barbarous, and in all pro-
 “bability long after the facts it relates; cor-
 “roborated

“ roborated by no concurring testimony, and
 “ resembling those fabulous accounts which
 “ every nation gives of its origin. Upon read-
 “ ing this book, we find it full of prodigies
 “ and miracles. It gives an account of a state
 “ of the world, and of human nature, entirely
 “ different from the present; of our fall from
 “ that state; of the age of man extended to
 “ near a thousand years; of the destruction
 “ of the world by a deluge; of the arbitrary
 “ choice of one people,—the countrymen of
 “ the author; of their deliverance from bon-
 “ dage by prodigies the most astonishing ima-
 “ ginable: I desire any one to lay his hand
 “ upon his heart, and after serious considera-
 “ tion declare, whether he thinks, that the
 “ falsehood of such a book, supported by such
 “ a testimony, would be more extraordinary
 “ and miraculous than all the miracles it re-
 “ lates; which is, however, necessary to
 “ make it be received, according to the mea-
 “ sure of probability above established.”

Ditto, p. 207. “ Upon the whole we may
 “ conclude, that the Christian religion not
 “ only was at first attended with miracles, but
 “ even at this day cannot be believed by any
 “ reasonable person without one. Mere
 “ reason is insufficient to convince us of its
 “ veracity: and whoever is moved by faith to
 “ assent to it, is conscious of a continued mi-
 “ racle in his own person, which subverts all
 “ the principles of his understanding, and gives

F

“ him

“ him a determination to believe what is most
 “ contrary to custom and experience.”

P R O P. VI.

Of all the modes of Christianity Popery is the best, and the reformation from thence was only the work of madmen and enthusiasts.

History, p. 7. “ The first reformers, who
 “ made such furious and successful attacks on
 “ the Romish superstition, and shook it to its
 “ lowest foundations, may safely be pronoun-
 “ ced to have been universally inflamed with
 “ the highest enthusiasm. These two species
 “ of religion, the superstitious and fanatical,
 “ stand in diametrical opposition to each other;
 “ and a large portion of the latter must neces-
 “ sarily fall to his share, who is so courageous
 “ as to controul authority, and so assuming as
 “ to obtrude his own innovations on the world.
 “ Hence that rage of dispute, which every
 “ where seized the new religionists; that dis-
 “ dain of ecclesiastical subjection; that con-
 “ tempt of ceremonies, and of all the exterior
 “ pomp and splendour of worship. And hence,
 “ too, that inflexible intrepidity, with which
 “ they braved dangers, torments, and even
 “ death itself; while they preached the doc-
 “ trine

“trine of peace, and carried the tumults of
“war, through every part of Christendom.”

Ditto, p. 8. “After the persecutions of
“Mary had chased abroad all the most obsti-
“nate reformers, who escaped her fury; they
“had leisure to imbibe a stronger tincture of
“the enthusiastic genius; and when they re-
“turned, upon the accession of Elisabeth, they
“imported it, in its full force and virulence,
“into their native country.”

Ditto, p. 10. “It had frequently been the
“practice of Puritanical clergymen, to form
“together certain assemblies, which they call-
“ed *prophefying*s; where alternately, as mo-
“ved by the spirit, they displayed their pious
“zeal in prayers and exhortations, and raised
“their own enthusiasm, as well as that of their
“audience, to the highest pitch, from that
“social contagion, which has so mighty an in-
“fluence on holy fervours, and from the mu-
“tual emulation which arose in those trials of
“religious eloquence.”

Ditto, p. 21. Speaking of those engaged in
the gun-powder plot, he calls them “pious
“devotees.”——But when, in p. 26. he has
occasion to talk of the reformers, he can find
no softer term than the “enraged and fanati-
“cal reformers.”

Ditto, p. 27. “That delicious country
“where the Roman Pontiff resides, was the
“source of all modern art and refinement,

“ and diffused on its superstition an air of popu-
 “ litariness, which distinguishes it from the gross
 “ rusticity of the other sects.”

And a little below he calls it the mother-
 church, and the religion of our fathers.—
 In the same spirit he styles Ravillac, who murdered
 the good King Henry of France, a
 “ pious madman.”

Ditto, p. 60. “ As the dawn of arts appear-
 “ ed throughout Europe in the sixteenth cen-
 “ tury, it might have been hoped, that when
 “ they should reach Scotland, they would put
 “ an end to that feudal anarchy, which there
 “ prevailed.—But before that happy period,
 “ —the Protestant fanaticism, more rapid in
 “ its progress, soon pierced into that remote
 “ country; and being at first strongly opposed
 “ by the supreme power, civil as well as eccle-
 “ siastical, it rose to a degree of fury, and with
 “ the most destructive violence bore down all
 “ opposition.”

In the next page, speaking of our first re-
 formers in Scotland, he says,

“ They did not, properly speaking, lead
 “ the multitude: they only ran before them
 “ in all their fanatical extravagancies.—De-
 “ termined enemies to monarchy by principle
 “ as well as inclination, the religious orators
 “ placed a vanity in affronting their prince;
 “ and would acknowledge no sovereign but
 “ Christ,

“ Christ, whose throne, being established in
 “ heaven, imposed little restraint upon them.”

Ditto, p. 62. “ The fire of devotion, ex-
 “ cited by novelty, and inflamed by opposi-
 “ tion, had so possessed the minds of the Scotch
 “ reformers, that all rites and ornaments, and
 “ even order of worship, were disdainfully re-
 “ jected as useless burdens; retarding the ima-
 “ gination in its rapturous ecstasies, and stint-
 “ ing the operations of that divine Spirit, by
 “ which they supposed themselves to be ani-
 “ mated. A mode of worship was establish-
 “ ed, the most naked and most simple imagi-
 “ nable; one that borrowed nothing from the
 “ senses; but reposed itself entirely on the
 “ contemplation of that divine essence, which
 “ discovers itself to the understanding only.
 “ This species of devotion, so suitable to the
 “ supreme Being, but so little suitable to hu-
 “ man frailty, was observed to occasion the
 “ most enormous ravages in the breast, and to
 “ subvert every rational principle of conduct
 “ and behaviour. The mind, straining for
 “ these extraordinary raptures, reaching them
 “ by short glances, succumbing again under
 “ its own weakness, rejecting all exterior aid
 “ of pomp and ceremony, was so occupied in
 “ this inward life, that it fled from every in-
 “ tercourse of society, and from every sweet
 “ or chearful amusement, which could soften
 “ or humanize the character.”

Ditto, p. 63. “ The finer arts too, though
 “ still

“ still rude in these northern kingdoms, were
 “ employed to adorn the churches; and the
 “ King’s chapel, in which an organ was erect-
 “ ed, and some pictures and statues displayed,
 “ was proposed as a model to the rest of the
 “ nation. But music was grating to the pre-
 “ judiced ears of the Scotch clergy; sculpture
 “ and painting appeared instruments of idola-
 “ try; the surplice was a rag of Popery; and
 “ each motion or gesture prescribed by the
 “ liturgy, was a step towards that spiritual Ba-
 “ bylon, so much the object of their horror
 “ and aversion. Every thing was deemed im-
 “ pious, but their own mystical comments on
 “ the scriptures, which they idolized, and
 “ whose eastern prophetic style they employed
 “ in every common occurrence of life.”

Ditto, p. 81. “ The genius of the church
 “ of England, so kindly to monarchy, for-
 “ warded the confederacy; its submission to
 “ Episcopal jurisdiction; its attachment to ce-
 “ remonies, to order, and to a decent pomp
 “ and splendour of worship; and, in a word,
 “ its affinity to the tame superstition of the Ca-
 “ tholics, rather than to the wild fanaticism
 “ of the Puritans.”

Ditto, p. 140. “ If King James wrote con-
 “ cerning witches and apparitions; who in that
 “ age did not admit the reality of these ficti-
 “ tious beings? If he has composed a com-
 “ mentary on the *Revelations*, and proved the
 “ Pope to be Antichrist; may not a similar re-
 “ proach

“proach be extended to the famous Napier;
 “and even to Newton, at a time when learn-
 “ing was much more advanced?”

Ditto, p. 303. Speaking of the design formed by the English parliament in the 1641 to reduce the Royal authority, he adds,

“But this project, it had not been in the
 “power, scarce in the intention of the popu-
 “lar leaders, to execute, had it not been for
 “the passion which seized the nation, for
 “Presbyterian discipline, and for the wild en-
 “thusiasm which at that time accompanied it.
 “The licence which the parliament had be-
 “stowed on this spirit, by checking ecclesia-
 “stical authority; the countenance and en-
 “couragement with which they had honoured
 “it; had already diffused its influence to a
 “wonderful degree; and all orders of men
 “had drunk deep of the intoxicating poison.
 “In each discourse or conversation this mode
 “of religion entered; in all business it had a
 “share; every elegant pleasure or amusement
 “it utterly annihilated; each vice or corrup-
 “tion of mind it promoted; scarce any dis-
 “ease or bodily distemper was totally exempt-
 “ed from it; and it became requisite, we
 “are told, for all physicians to be expert in
 “the spiritual profession, and, by theological
 “considerations, to allay those religious ter-
 “rors with which their patients were so gene-
 “rally haunted.”

Ditto,

Ditto, p. 395. "Whatever ridicule, to a philosophic mind, may be thrown on pious ceremonies, it must be confessed, that, during a very religious age, no institutions can be more advantageous to the rude multitude, and tend more to mollify that fierce and gloomy spirit of devotion, to which they are so subject. Even the English church, though it had retained a share of Popish superstition, may justly be thought too naked and unadorned, and still to approach too near the abstract and spiritual religion of the Puritans. Laud and his associates, by reviving a few primitive institutions of this nature, corrected the error of the first reformers, and presented to the affrightened and astonished mind, some sensible, exterior observances, which might occupy it during its religious exercises, and abate the violence of its disappointed efforts. The thought, no longer bent on that divine and mysterious essence, so superior to the narrow capacities of mankind, was able, by means of the new model of devotion, to relax itself in the contemplation of pictures, postures, vestments, buildings; and all the fine arts which ministered to religion, thereby received additional encouragement."

Thus, Gentlemen, I have laid before you a few of the many passages which occur in the works of these two authors, and which at the very first view appear to strike at the foundations

tions of all virtue and religion, both natural and revealed.—That the promoters of such impious opinions deserve the very highest censures of the church, is beyond dispute. What you shall think proper to do in this assembly, a short time will discover. Only I will venture to say, that if these things are overlooked, after the zeal you have lately shewn to support the authority of your own sentences, it will in some measure verify a common observation, That it is safer to revile the King than the ministry.—Nor do I know how you will parry the blow, when every one has it in his power to tell you, You deposed a minister who disowned your authority, but inrol, as a member of your courts, an elder who has disowned the authority of almighty God; and that some of you at least live in the greatest intimacy with one who represents the blessed Saviour as an impostor, and his religion as a cunningly-devised fable.—May your conduct be such as fully to wipe off all these reproaches; and testify to the world, that you will have no society with the workers of iniquity,

F I N I S.

lions of all virtue and religion, both spiritual
 and temporal. — I trust the promoters of these
 impious opinions believe the very highest con-
 fidence of the church, is beyond dispute. What
 you shall think proper to do in this assembly,
 a short time will discover. — Why I will venture
 to say, that if these things are overlooked, and
 for the rest you have lately shown to improve
 the authority of your own language, it will in
 some measure verify a common observation,
 That it is better to reveal the King than the mi-
 nistry. — Now do I know how you will pay
 the blow, when every one has it in his power
 to tell you, I am desirous a minister who dis-
 owned your authority, but inured, as a mem-
 ber of your estate, an officer who has disown-
 ed the authority of almighty God; and that
 some of you at least live in the greatest im-
 punity with one who represents the blessed Sa-
 viour as an impostor, and his religion as a
 cunningly devised tale. — May your con-
 duct be such as fully to witness all these re-
 proaches; and testify to the world, that you
 will have no society with the workers of in-
 iquity.

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